
DISTRESS.

A

POEM.

[Price Two SHILLINGS and SIX-PENCE.]

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O

P

DISTRESS.

A

P O E M.

By ROBERT NOYES, Cranbrook, Kent.

“ I will speak in the anguish of my Spirit : I will complain in the Bitterness of my Soul.”

J O B.

*Per varios casus, et tot discrimina rerum,
Tendimus ad TUMULUM.*

VIRGIL.

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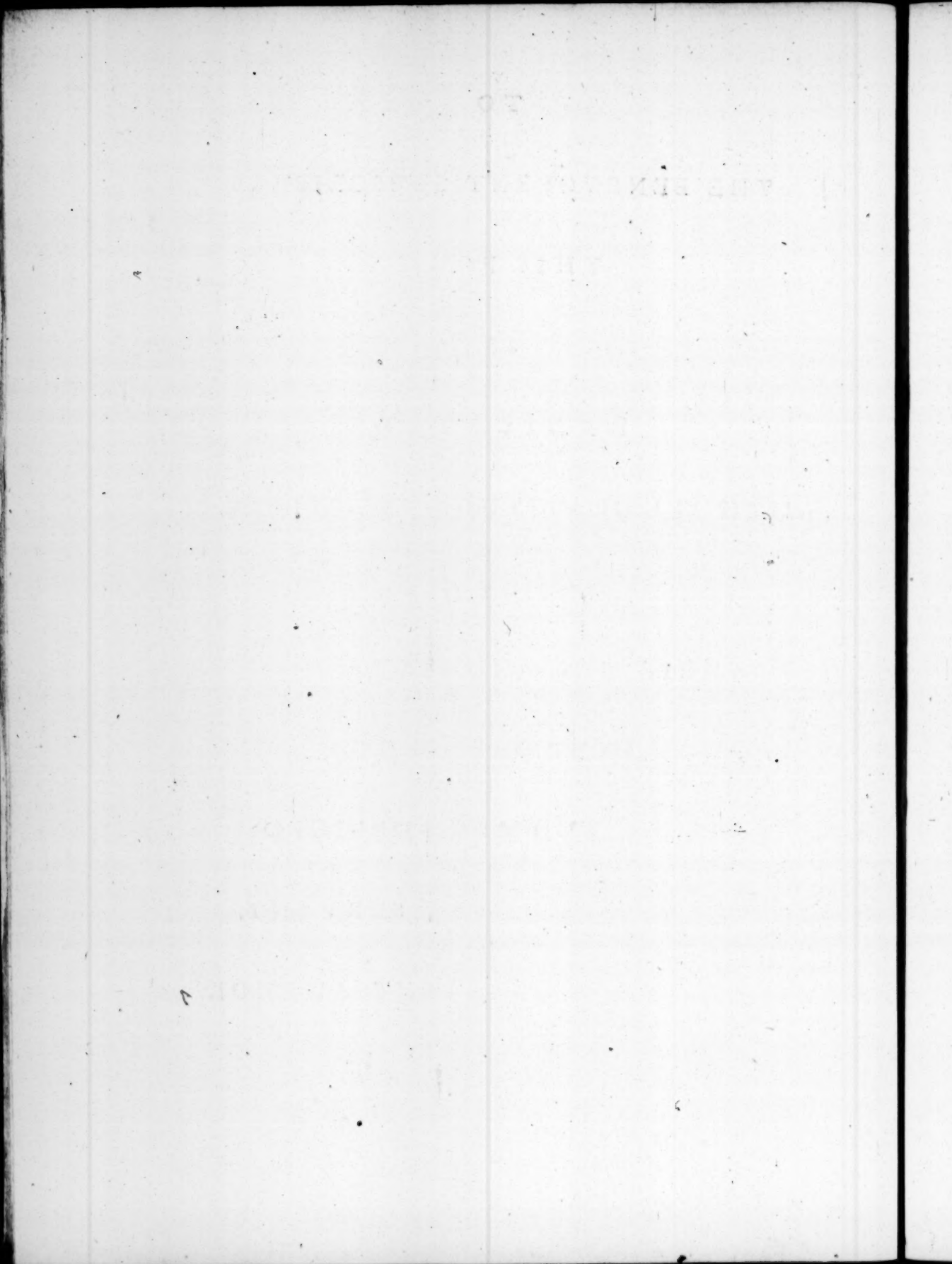
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43.
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TO
THE BENEVOLENT SUBSCRIBERS
THIS POEM
IS
DEDICATED,
WITH ALL GRATITUDE AND RESPECT,
BY
THEIR MOST HUMBLE
MOST OBEDIENT
AND MUCH OBLIGED
SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.



T O

The candid READER.

TH E following Poem, and the personal Subject of it, was occasioned by the cruel and unprecedented behaviour of a Dissenting congregation, who dismissed the Author from his ministry among them (after having spent twenty-six years of the prime of life in their service) without assigning to him any other reason for their procedure, than a false one; for they being asked by him in the public Assembly, “ Why he had notice given him to leave them ? ” the only answer he received was, “ Because they were not able to maintain a Minister ; ” though at the same time they intended to invite another, and to give him (at least) ten pounds a year more than they gave the Author.

Some

Some men can utter duplicity and falsehood, and yet (in their own opinions) be very good Christians. May such persons enjoy unenvied the comforts of their religion while they live, for it will be of no benefit to them when they are dead !

P. S. Since the first composition of his Poem, the Author hath enlarged it by the addition of two scenes of DISTRESS; one drawn from North America, and the other from Spithead.

R. N.

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D I S T R E S S .

A

P O E M.



IS there a Muse will her assistance lend
To him, who wants a patron and a friend?
Is there among the gay and sprightly Nine,
Who on **DISTRESS** will condescend to shine
With ray indulgent? Then I'd soar and sing,
Tho' Penury's hard hand hath clipt my wing.
Humbly I've urg'd my suit to ev'ry Muse;
All turn disdainful and my suit refuse:

B

How

How shall I tune, forlorn, the mournful reed,
While my heart sickens, and my sorrows bleed?

Some gentle Spirit whispers in my ear,
"Produce the song"—"Suppress it," says Despair—
The gentle Spirit's whisper I obey,
And to his care commit my feeble lay.

Far from the seats of Affluence and of Ease,
Where Plenty riots, and soft sonnets please;
Where Mirth's associates in the banquet join,
And quaff the richness of Burgundia's vine,
DISTRESS, recluse, a batter'd cottage finds,
That yields no shelter from tempestuous winds;
Whose crevic'd walls admit the driven snow,
And mark the tenant for a child of woe;
Their flimsy texture spiders here extend,
And crickets here their notes with screech-owls blend;
Here hunger ravens; hence sweet rest retires;
Hence comforts vanish, and here hope expires;
This dire abode no traveller ventures near;
No brisk associates—for no banquet's here;
Yet her associates pale DISTRESS can name;
Hunger, and Thirst, Contempt and honest Shame,

With

With anxious Care, and gloomy Solitude,
(All guests unwelcome) on her cot intrude.

Hunger and Thirst on cold DISTRESS await,
And threaten famine in her small retreat;
These to the rich a transient visit pay;
Plenty relieves them, and they haste away:
But with the poor their residence is long,
Their presence painful, and their cravings strong;
“ Give bread ! Give water ! ”—but in vain they cry ;
The shelf is empty, and the fountain dry :
No pleas avail that Poverty suggests,
T’ appease the tumult of her irksome guests ;
She schemes, she wishes, their demands to grant,
And says, “ To-morrow shall supply their want : ”
“ To-morrow ! ” both with angry haste reply,
“ Give, Give us now, or else to-night you die.”

Contempt, foul fiend, the base-born child of Pride,
Begot by Folly, and to Hell ally’d,
Through strange perverseness meek DISTRESS pursues,
And all her woes with cruel pleasure views.
Quick from her eye Disdain (a poison’d dart)
Flies off oblique, and wounds her broken heart ;

Hunger, and Thirst, have painful pointed stings,
 But fly Contempt a ten-fold sorrow brings,
 And brings it, laden with a ten-fold weight,
 On those who sink to worse from better state.
 Whose eye contemptuous keenest flashes sends?
 His, whom we number'd once among our friends.
 Whose brow reveals the most disgusting scorn?
 His, but our equal, or inferior born.
 Whose venom'd tongue excites our saddest tears?
 His, whom we once sustain'd in happier years.

Can this foul fiend, the base-born child of Pride,
 In any, but the rankest, breast reside?
 The formal Saint, who carries in his face
 The serious picture of internal grace;
 Who pleads the orphan's and the widow's cause,
 With seeming pity, and with self applause;
 Whose lips the law of charity can teach,
 And love and friendship most devoutly preach;
 Who censures pride with hypocritic zeal,
 And paints its downfall in a whining tale;
 Who for the wretched heaves an artful sigh,
 And gives DISTRESS the tribute of his eye;
 Pleads,

Pleads, pities, preaches, censures, weeps, and sighs,
 Yet is no Saint; but Satan in disguise:
 A man, like this, within his heart provides
 A filthy corner, where the fiend resides;
 If to this Saint some wretch presents his suit,
 Out starts the fiend, and strikes the suppliant mute.

Shame, such as ne'er the splendid villain grac'd,
 Flushes the cheek of competence debas'd:
 The blush that joins in low DISTRESS's train,
 Springs not from guilt but witness to pain,
 A conscious pain, excited by despair,
 At thought of what we are, and what we were:
 Reflection traces life's smooth seasons gone,
 And mourns the former pleasing scenes withdrawn;
 Forward it looks, and gloomy clouds arise,
 That threaten danger, and create surprize;
 Peculiar hardships mark the steps of those
 Who pass from comfort to DISTRESS and woes.

What anxious cares the poor man's bosom vex,
 In dreams torment him, and by day perplex!
 The poor, I mean, whose prosperous noon is past;
 Whose adverse night draws on with winged haste:

What

What various schemes his busy thoughts devise,
 To ward off want, and silence nature's cries !
 How small the pittance yesterday supply'd !
 To-day a smaller pittance is deny'd ;
 He hopes to-morrow will more lib'ral be,
 But proves the greatest niggard of the three.
 Less anxious thoughts his mind would discompose,
 Were none the partners of his daily woes ;
 Had he been doom'd to bear the load alone,
 This mournful verse the world had never known ;
 The wretch dejected had in secret sigh'd
 Beneath his burden, and in secret died :
 But tender pledges of connubial love,
 Partake his wants, and all his pity move :
 Their mother's joy—their mother now no more,
 To see—to feel—their sorrows, and deplore—

Turn from this scene, my soul, awhile, and sigh,
 And lift to heav'n the hand—the heart—the eye !
 Then to this scene, blest shade ! I'll turn again,
 And solemnize thy death in plaintive strain.

Father of Mercies ! whose indulgent ear,
 Is always open to an humble pray'r !

Whose

Whose pity fees, whene'er thy creatures grieve ;
 Whose bounteous hands their indigence relieve !
 O ! for His sake, whose lips, with grace replete,
 Successful plead before thy mercy-seat ;
 Pour down thy blessings on the sons of need,
 Who at thy throne for blessings intercede !
 Their fears remove, their pressing wants supply,
 And guide their feet through life with watchful eye ;
 To their sad hearts restore departed joy,
 So shall thy praise their grateful tongues employ !

To poor DISTRESS sad Solitude repairs,
 And with her broods in silence o'er her fears ;
 While to the rich base parasites resort,
 And at the shrine of Mammon make their court ;
 Who turn their footsteps to the moss-spread door,
 Where sit and pine the solitary poor ?
 Shun'd by the proud with no less tim'rous care,
 Than flies the unwounded from the stricken deer.

Is there among the opulent and great,
 Who deign to enter Poverty's retreat ?
 Is there who makes the Christian name his boast,
 But to the virtues of a Christian's lost ?—

Some

Some few there are, how blest and honour'd they !
 Who hear the (*) Saviour's precepts, and obey ;
 Who feed the hungry with a heart benign ;
 Who give refreshment, when the thirsty pine ;
 Who grant the stranger shelter from the storm,
 Who clothe the naked, and the frost-nipt warm ;
 The sick who visit with humane intent,
 And seek the cottage where the poor lament ;
 To these kind, blest, and honour'd few, I raise
 An humble column of unfeigned praise ;
 Above the rest, if one in goodness shines,
 To whom my muse inscribes these artless lines,
 BENEVOLUS is he—the friend unfought,
 Whose soul with ev'ry lovely virtue's fraught.

Now, my sad soul, life's former scenes revise !
 Compare the summer with the winter skies !—
 Ye halcyon days ! O ! why for ever fled ?
 Why beats the storm on this devoted head ?
 O ! that I were, as in bright seasons gone,
 When (b) God with favour on my dwelling shone !

(*) See Matt. xxv. 35, &c.

(b) See Job xxix. 2, 3, &c.

When

When by his light I walk'd thro' darksome ways,
And peace and safety crown'd my youthful days !
When Plenty's hand my homely table spread,
And Rest her roses scatter'd on my bed !
When Hunger's plaint ne'er pierc'd a father's ear,
Nor children's wants drew forth a mother's tear !—

Now fights of anguish meet my weeping eyes,
And prospects dreary all around me rise ;
The infant's moan a parent's heart pervades,
Who, in their looks, their wants with sorrow reads ;
Reads, in such lines as eloquence excel,
The woes and wishes that their bosoms swell.
Will Heav'n the shaggy lion's young supply,
And hear, and feed the ravens when they cry ?
Yet leave the human offspring to complain,
To sigh—to weep—to supplicate—in vain :
Sooner shall whirlwinds rock the sea to rest,
And mothers stab their sucklings at the breast ;
Sooner shall tygers from the desert rove,
And wander harmless thro' the festive grove ;
Sooner the leopard change his spotted side ;
A feather sooner stem the rapid tide ;

C

Sooner

Sooner the Moor efface his fable hue,
And sooner earth be delug'd with a dew,
Than God his timely succours shall withhold
From babes oppress'd with hunger, thirst and cold.

Where is the bounty of the sons of Wealth,
Whom Heav'n hath blest with opulence and health ?
Where is the eye that " weeps with those who weep ?"
Where the soft voice that lulls DISTRESS to sleep ?
Where the kind hand ?—the sympathizing heart
To feel another's woe, and joy impart ?—
Bounty is fled, and seeks her native sky,
And pitying tears forsake the human eye ;
No strains to lull DISTRESS—the soothing voice
Is drown'd in giddy Mirth's tumultuous noise ;
Flinty those hearts that once with pity flow'd ;
Clos'd now the hands that Christian alms bestow'd :
O ! Heav'n ! send Bounty back from where she's fled !
Let eyes relenting tears of pity shed !
Let the soft voice to sorrow comfort give !
The heart be melted, and the hand relieve !
Then will of wretches the most wretched own,
That Charity on earth hath fix'd her throne :

'Tis

'Tis fix'd on earth—I feel her gentle sway,
And humbly at her shrine my homage pay.

Straight from thine altar, Charity, shall rise
The smoke of incense, and perfume the skies !
Incense of Gratitude, which fragrance yields
Surpassing citron-groves or spicy fields ;
Accept the off'ring which I bring to thee,
Thou fairest sister of the lovely three !
My needy hands no costly tribute hold ;
No bright oblation of Peruvian gold ;
Yet I present what thou wilt ne'er despise,
—A grateful heart in willing sacrifice—
A grateful heart is all I have to give ;
O ! Charity benign ! that all receive !

Now on that scene, reflect, my faithful muse,
Nor to the dead a sigh—a tear refuse !—
—To that sad scene Death's blacken'd pencil wrought,
My soul returns in melancholy thought.

Come, Contemplation, from thy much-lov'd shades,
Which scarce a ray of summer's noon pervades !

Quit for awhile thy consecrated cave,
 And pay with me a visit to the grave !
 Come, solemn Night, in deepest fable clad !
 Come, join the train, with Silence ever sad !
 Come, sit with me beneath yon baneful yew,
 And see my sorrow pass in flow review !
 On " Joys departed, never to return,"
 My soul depress'd shall meditate—and mourn ;
 First mourn " departed joys," and then review
 My scenes of woe, from yonder baneful yew.

Once my fond heart with secret rapture glow'd ;
 Once, like a stream, my bosom bliss o'erflow'd ;
 Nor thought my rapture like a fleeting dream,
 Or my bliss transient as the flowing stream :
 Delusive world ! who on thy smiles presume,
 Rear, unexpected, for their hopes a tomb—
 Once prosp'rous suns around me lustre shed,
 Now set these suns, and all their rays are fled ;
 What friends and friendship meant, of old, I knew ;
 How cold that friendship now ! those friends how few !
 As fickle flowers, beneath a vernal sky,
 Bloom and are fragrant, but in winter die ;

So,

So, when in life, wealth's store our wishes meets,
Friendship will flourish, and diffuse its sweets ;
Let the scene shift, and poverty ensue,
Friendship withdraws, and scarcely bids, Adieu.

Once sacred friendship, kindled into love,
Made all my hours with soft endearments move ;
Heav'n gave a wife—to me—to Heav'n endear'd,
Who all my comforts and my sorrows shar'd ;
But Heav'n resum'd her to the world of bliss,
And left me lonely to lament in this.

Now to yon yew I turn my weary feet,
Where Silence, Night, and Contemplation meet ;
With these companions, suited to my taste,
The grave I visit where her ashes rest ;
Rest in firm hope to rise to life divine,
When earth and seas shall all their dead resign ;
There I repose, and in calm sadness there
Pour on her dust a tributary tear :
Nor shall my soul, while there for her I weep,
Forget the children (*) fall'n in death asleep :

(*) Three of the Author's children lie buried near their mother.

Tho'

Tho' first my tears a mother's grave bedew,
 Yet I retain some tender drops for you.
 These branches, blasted by the tainting breath
 Of languid sickness, and relentless death,
 How droop'd my heart ! my fainting spirit said,
 " Youths spring like flow'rs, and soon like flow'rs they fade ;"
 But when the stock which those fair branches bore,
 Wither'd and died ; my hopes were then no more :
 Yet calm reflection bids my hopes revive,
 For Truth asserts, (*) " The tree cut down shall live,"
 And all its branches, now decay'd and dead,
 Again shall shoot, and with new verdure spread.
 Haste, glorious morn ! when from the fertile tomb,
 These all shall rise, and bear eternal bloom :
 And when yon yew shall lose its green, and die,
 Ye shall reflourish, evergreens on high.

When at your graves I shed the friendly tear,
 How empty all terrestrial things appear !
 Then would my soul with transport soar above,
 To realms of life, light, liberty, and love.
 Ye gay, who flutter in the brilliant ball,
 Nor hear when Reason, and when Conscience, call !

(*) See Job xiv. 7, 8, &c.

Return'd from thence, some cemetery tread,
And wisdom learn among the silent dead !

Close by the graves where your lov'd relicks rest,
Let my cold limbs by some kind hand be plac'd !
If, when my eyes are by Death's signet seal'd,
Some hand of Friendship will that kindness yield ;
Peace to that friend who with my wish complies,
And peace attend his manes, when he dies !

See ! Morn, awak'd, unfolds her purple eye,
And bids old Night these dreary regions fly !
The noisy world, from Morpheus' chains set loose,
Warns sober Silence to her still recluse ;
The din confus'd of ever busy men,
Sends Contemplation to her cave again ;
With them I leave the baneful yew and tomb,
And now the subject of DISTRESS resume.

Say, from what curs'd, from what polluted spring,
Flow the sharp sorrows, which I mournful sing !
Than follow these in all their devious course,
Sooner my feet might trace Nile's hidden source :

The

The secret motions of a restless soul,
 What eye can search, what finite pow'r controul?
 From the foul heart, where pride and malice dwell
 With ev'ry vice that bears the stamp of hell,
 Corrupted actions, as by instinct, flow,
 And make the world a seat of sin and woe:
 But who suspects a treach'rous deed from those
 Whom the fair robes of sanctity inclose?
 Prudence against an open foe may shield,
 And caution guides us in the dangerous field:
 With those who friendship's specious vizard wear,
 Unarm'd we walk, because we nothing fear:
 The dart that deepest to my bosom went,
 Flew from the bow pretended friendship bent.

As some poor wretch, whose little crazy boat
 By cruel hands is set in storms afloat,
 And soon by boist'rous winds and waves is tost
 Far from the covert of a shelt'ring coast,
 Sees the shore lessen, and the billows rise,
 And wat'ry ruin spread before his eyes;
 While the base authors of his sudden woe,
 Stand on the beach, nor signs of pity show:

So

So in a painful, unexpected hour,
By holy cunning and religious pow'r,
My feeble bark to sea was push'd, to meet
The waves that life's wide shore with fury beat;
And the same craft, the same opposing hand,
That push'd it off, prevents its reaching land.

Ye rigid zealots ! fond to domineer,
Hear a sad truth, and tremble when ye hear !—
—He, who your souls thro' various seasons fed
With " living waters," and celestial bread,
Starves by your choice, nor will your hands bestow
The smallest boon to succour human woe.
Ye bold pretenders to religious ways,
Read what the (*) servant of the Saviour says !
" He, to whose trust the hands of Providence
" This world's possessions bounteously dispense,
" And sees his poor dejected brother need,
" Yet shuts his bowels when distresses plead ;
" How dwells in him the love of God" sincere ?—
—As dwells compassion in a Greenland bear.

(*) See 1 John, iii. 17.

Strangers to want ! of every good posselt,
 That makes mankind, or seems to make them, blest ;
 Whose golden stores the poor man's mites exceed,
 Whose wealth abounds beyond a creature's need ;
 Whose purse commands the dainties of the West,
 And silken vestments of the splendid East ;
 Whose tables smoke with every varied dish,
 From high-sauc'd venison, to the luscious fish ;
 Amidst the countless treasures of your hoard ;
 Amidst the plenty that regales your board ;
 Strangers to want ! while with such affluence fraught,
 Spare ye the poor a pittance, or a thought ?
 Strangers to want ! can ye, presumptuous, say,
 No clouds shall rise to overcast your day ?
 Time past hath prov'd how fleeting riches are,
 Time future to this truth may witness bear ;
 By means no human wisdom can foresee,
 Or pow'r prevent, a sudden change may be :
 War, in its route, may plunder all your store,
 And leave you friendless, desolate, and poor ;
 Your spacious lands, posselt by tenure fair,
 Earthquakes may swallow, and thus bar the heir ;
 Your wealth, entrusted to the treach'rous sea,
 May sink, or fall to pirates hands a prey ;

Your

Your all the flames may waste, or lawless men;
Strangers to want! shall ye be strangers then?
Since so precarious all you now enjoy,
A treasure seek which nothing can destroy!

Should earthquakes, flames, war, seas and pirates spare,
Still there is one will strip the wealthy bare:
DEATH—King of Terrors, whose despotic sway,
The mortal race reluctantly obey,
Distinction levels, when his bow he bends,
And all the noble with th' ignoble blends,
With hand impartial strikes the fated blow,
And lays mankind in common ruin low:
Inspect the dust, o'er which the marble weeps;
Inspect the ashes, where the peasant sleeps;
And say, what diff'rence in the putrid earth
That form'd the vulgar, and the man of birth:
Hence let false pride instructive lessons learn,
And hence the folly of contempt discern.

One is our parent, and that parent good,
Whose numerous children claim an equal blood,
From India's savage and the Scythian wild,
To Europeans and the fondled child;

Though all from one original descend,
 And all promiscuous to one exit tend,
 Yet in their passage thro' life's chequer'd state,
 What various scenes their various roads await!
 With restless steps some honour's heights attain,
 While others, humble, tread the lowly plain,
 Some seek the vale, and dangerous summits shun,
 In devious paths some stray, and are undone.
 Nor is their lot less diff'rent than their ways;
 Some walk in gloomy, some in gilded days;
 Their lot unequal, tho' their parent good;
 Perplexing truth! how little understood!
 Unequal lot, as judges reason blind;
 But just and equal in th' eternal mind:
 Tho' Vice high honours and rewards may reap,
 And Virtue sit disconsolate, and weep;
 Yet let not man, at random, hence conclude,
 The heav'nly parent is not just or good;
 But rest with patience rest, in whate'er sphere
 The will of Providence hath plac'd him here,
 And patient wait, till God shall in the end
 Unfold, what now man cannot comprehend.

Tho'

Tho' Heav'n, all-wise, hath mark'd me for DISTRESS,
 May Heav'n, all-good, my fellow mortals bless !
 May none thro' Earth's wide-peopled regions know,
 What ills from friendless poverty will flow !
 What storms await Prosperity's decline,
 And what dread anguish dwells with woes like mine.
 And may the children of my warmest pray'r,
 Heav'n's daily favour and protection share !
 Almighty Father ! shield them with thine arm ;
 Their feet preserve from vanity and harm !
 Their steps direct with ever-watchful eye,
 And let thy bounty all their wants supply !
 From sins, and snares, and sorrows keep them free,
 And may their souls for succour fly to thee !
 For them my heart in fond affection sighs,
 And tears for them in secret cloud my eyes ;
 Their smiles of innocence with joy I view,
 And hear their prattle with a pleasure new ;
 But when my fears anticipate their woes,
 My heart no longer joy and pleasure knows ;
 O ! may his hand, whose Providence is good,
 Give for their bodies, raiment, rest and food !
 And to their souls impart his needful grace,
 To do his will, and early seek his face !

In

In hopes of this my fainting spirits rise,
And bid farewell to all beneath the skies.

Will the cold grave afford a quiet rest
To all who droop, by want and woe oppress?—
Hail! peaceful chamber, where the weary sleep;
Where stand'rous tongues perpetual silence keep;
Where harrafs'd slaves shake off the galling chain,
And where DISTRESS forgets her ev'ry pain;
Where tears no more descend from sorrow's eye;
Where the sad heart no longer vents a sigh.
Thou hallow'd refuge! still' abode of peace!
Where dangers reach not, and where troubles cease,
Thy portals open, and admission give
The wretch, to whom 'tis misery to live!
Who deem thee cruel are to reason blind;
O! grant me shelter—and I'll call thee kind!

From themes distressful, seen and heard by few,
I pass to scenes that meet a kingdom's view;
Scenes, where DISTRESS, in awful shade, appears,
And asks the tribute of a flood of tears.

Could

Could my muse, pinion'd, spread her wings, and fly
 From Albion's borders to the Western sky,
 Beneath whose ample arch of structure strong,
 The vast Atlantic rolls his waves along ;
 There would she seek DISTRESS, with her deplore,
 In cities, deserts, and the hostile shore ;
 Paint her sad cheeks, bedew'd with crystal tears ;
 Unveil her breast, distent with sick'ning tears ;
 Present to view that sister of Despair,
 Tortur'd with anguish, and of frantic air,
 With hands close claspt, and loose her sanguine hair !

My muse, advent'rous, takes her arduous flight,
 And reaches safe fam'd Bunker's tow'ring height ;
 Thence views with weeping eye, and heart-felt pain,
 The ranfack'd village, and the purpled plain ;
 From thence, dejected, sees the mangled dead,
 Who for their country nobly fought and bled ;
 Thence hears the wounded hero's parting groan,
 The mother's wailings, and the widow's moan ;
 From thence beholds DISTRESS, in solemn mood,
 Stalk o'er the slain, and tinge her feet with blood ;
 Around, the ghosts of slaughter'd patriots rise,
 And call for vengeance to the dreary skies.

Far

Far as the eye can reach, my mournful muse,
 The wand'ring footsteps of DISTRESS pursues,
 And sees her rush into the thicket wild,
 (The dreadful haunt of Nature's fiercest child)
 Where the rough savage, train'd to blood and toil,
 (Murder his trade, and all his treasure, spoil)
 In ambush lies, and whets the pointed steel,
 Whose scalping edge, youth, age, and beauty feel:
 So Fame reports—nor doubt her language now,
 As pure from falsehood as a vestal's vow.

Near Penn's domain once dwelt a sober sage,
 Grown venerably grey with grief and age;
 The bridal partner of his younger years,
 Shar'd in his joys and kindly sooth'd his cares;
 One was their wish, their daily pray'r was one,
 That Heav'n, to seal their bliss, would give a son,
 Whose growing strength might prove his parents stay,
 When theirs, thro' time, was sinking to decay:
 At length, to recompense their mutual love,
 Heav'n gave the hope she should a mother prove;
 Th' expected hour to crown their joy arrives;
 When, lo! the mother dies—the child survives:

Thus

Thus in one moment (such the will of Heav'n)
 The wife is snatch'd away—a daughter giv'n.
 The father eyes his infant with delight;
 Shields her by day, and wakes to shield by night;
 She lives the object of his fondest care;
 Her health and safety his attention share;
 His lips instruction to her mind impart,
 And fix sage lessons on her ductile heart:
 With pious joy her rev'rend sire she hears;
 Imbibes his wisdom, and his truths reveres;
 Treads in his steps with circumspective care;
 His precepts learns with love and filial fear.

Revolving years her lovely charms disclose,
 Pure as the snow, and blushing as the rose;
 Her growing beauties spread a lustre far;
 Mild as the radiance of the ev'ning star:
 Palemon saw the lustre of her eye,
 And modest cheek of roseate damask dye;
 He saw—and sudden felt love's pleasing smart
 Thrill thro' his breast, and centre in his heart;
 A kindred flame her tender bosom warms,
 And adds new beauty to her maiden charms;

E

The

The youth profess'd a passion for this fair,
 Pure as the thoughts of Heaven's archangels are,
 And she for him a mutual love profess'd:
 They wed—and by her father both are blest.
 Their nuptial state with joys supreme was crown'd,
 Such as the innocent in Eden found;
 The Sun unclouded gilds each happy day,
 And Life's clear stream unruffled glides away;
 No storms disturb the silence of their nights,
 And morn awakes them to renew'd delights;
 Heav'n on their labours with indulgence smiles,
 And sweet discourse their evening hours beguiles;
 T' enlarge the measure of their worldly joy,
 Heav'n crown'd their wish, by giving them a boy.
 In this calm scene of pleasure and repose,
 This favour'd pair nor guilt, nor danger knows;
 Secure, in hope, their moments softly past,
 And each new day was brighter than the last.
 As gathering clouds obscure the clearest skies,
 And sudden waves in calmest seas arise;
 So in one fatal hour, a blast destroys
 The fragrant bloom of their domestic joys.

Dark was the night, and scarce a trembling breeze
 Was heard to whisper through the neighbouring trees,
 When to Sleep's arms the household was withdrawn,
 To rest in safety 'till the morrow's dawn;
 The morrow dawns, and blushes at the sight
 Of bloody scenes, that shun detecting light:
 Urg'd by a nameless thirst for human prey,
 A savage band approach'd where Beauty lay;
 Where Innocence, and Youth, and Age reclin'd
 In sleep, refreshing as a Southern wind.

Palemon first a harmless victim fell
 To Rage, relentless as the Prince of Hell;
 The Sire, tho' bending with a load of years,
 To save his daughter ev'ry danger dares;
 With wrath paternal to th' assassins flew,
 And at one blow a swarthy murd'rer flew;
 By some rough hand this ancient hero dies—
 The trembling mother for her husband sighs;
 Sighs, and intreats to spare her infant's life,
 Her sighs they hear, and spare him—with the knife—
 The tender parent, frantic with despair,
 To meet Death's arrow lays her bosom bare;

Death—how unkind ! refus'd to bend his bow,
And life prolong'd for scenes of future woe.

Pleas'd with the charms of beauty, drench'd in tears,
The savage tribe to gloomy deserts bears
The weeping mother, void of all defence,
Save what she hop'd from Heav'n and innocence :
Now thoughts distressful agitate her breast,
And from her eye-lids steal their wonted rest :
The lovely captive held in bondage dire,
Weeps for herself—her infant—husband—fire ;
Weeps—and no eye to shed a social tear ;
No friend to sooth her sorrows, or to share.
Amidst this scene of misery and awe
Too sad and complex for my muse to draw)
She boldly braves, by solitary flight,
Danger in deserts, and the gloom of night ;
Thro' woods and swamps, unpurs'd by human feet,
She seeks from savages a wild retreat ;
With heedless steps she traverses the glade,
And finds, at length, the covert of a shade ;
There droops, and sleeps, forgetful of her pain ;
The Sun revives her—and she sighs again :

Fatigu'd

Fatigu'd with wanderings, and depress'd with care,
Deaths all around her, and no succour near;
With hunger faint; to slake her thirst no stream;
And Hope, once shining, left her now no gleam;
She sinks beneath the burden of her grief,
And prays for death to minister relief.
At once she faints and lifts to Heav'n her eyes,
Leans on the bosom of DISTRESS—and dies.

From those bleak hills, where bloody fountains spring
My roving muse returns with wearied wing
To visit happier climes—climes happier made
By sweet vicissitudes of heat and shade;
By wholesome laws, and by a clement throne
That hears with pity every prisoner's moan;
By watery walls, which Heav'n decreed should flow
To give protection from each foreign foe:
Yet these blest climes, though safe from Gallia's host,
From sudden dangers no exemption boast.
As in some Green, plain, smooth, and fair to fight,
Rubs check the bowl at hand directed right;
Divert its bias, or impede its force,
And leave it distant from its destin'd course:

So

So on life's green unnumber'd rubs arise,
 And least expected always most surprize :
 Thus safe at anchor lay old (*) Ocean's pride,
 And rode triumphant on the lordly tide ;
 No danger seen ; no wave to wake a fear ;
 No danger seen, and yet was ruin near :
 Mirth, such as ne'er a home-bred land-man charm'd,
 Glow'd in each heart, and ev'ry bosom warm'd ;
 The boatswain's whistle through the ship was heard ;
 The caulker's labour'd, and the sailors cheer'd ;
 No danger seen ; no fear to raise a sigh ;
 No danger fear'd, and yet was ruin nigh :
 Heel'd on her side the stately fabric lay,
 And wide her broad flag wav'd in proud display,
 When (weep, my Muse ! at her disaster weep !)
 A sudden gust consigns her to the deep ;
 Then with her sunk the hardy tars and brave,
 From life and service, to a fluid grave ;
 With them descended Valour's fav'rite son, (b)
 Who fought her battles, and her laurels won.

(*) The ROYAL GEORGE, first rate ship, 100 guns, overset and sunk at anchor at Spithead on August 29, 1782, having then on board 796 persons, of whom 495 were lost.

(b) Rear Admiral Kempenfelt.

Distressful scene! what piteous moans arise!
 Spread through the decks, and echo to the skies;
 The childless mother heard the tale with woe;
 Tears from the father, childless, secret flow;
 The widow wails her husband sunk in death,
 Kisses her children, and resigns her breath.

DISTRESS! associate of all human kind!
 In calms we meet thee; meet thee in the wind:
 From thy assaults no garrison can shield;
 To thy domain must ev'ry mortal yield;
 Thou visit'st where the splendid monarch reigns,
 And haunt'st the cottager on lonely plains;
 No breast so sacred, but thy power invades,
 And each frail creature thro' thy river wades.
 Where from thy arm for refuge shall we fly?
 —To Earth's cold bosom, and yon friendly sky—
 There no DISTRESS the body can annoy,
 And there the soul exults in endless joy.

If thus DISTRESS pursues the human race,
 And ME pursues with unremitting pace;
 Then——

Farewell,

Farewell, sublunary scenes, and gay !
 Where the old trifle, and where children play ;
 Where youths fantastic weave the magic dance,
 And to the grave with heedless steps advance ;
 Where busy crowds, like insects, swarm and die ;
 And Pleasure's sons pursue a painted fly !

Farewell, ye sublunary scenes, and sage !
 Where the grave Sophist turns the midnight page ;
 With close attention into Nature pries,
 Reads 'till he's lost, and thinks he grows more wise ;
 Where the deep Magi of our learned day,
 In fancy tread the cometary way ;
 Where Locke's disciples spin the logic thread ;
 Where Galen's pupils from the Grecian dead,
 Like bees industrious, gather healing skill,
 And thence prescribe the salutary pill ;
 Where studious minds from Coke instruction draw,
 And learn to trace the labyrinths of law ;
 Where Priests sedate, to heap polemic lore,
 Turn dusty volumes of the Fathers o'er.

Farewell, ye sublunary scenes, and dull !
 Made more insipid by the prating fool ;

Where

Where flutt'ring fops at Wisdom's lectures hiss ;
 Where at Wit's target coxcombs aim and miss ;
 Where self-conceit o'er modesty prevails,
 And cloy's society with senseless tales ;
 Where misers waste their years in heaping store,
 Toil to be rich, and yet are always poor ;
 Where sordid Epicures, of boasted taste,
 Pamper themselves to give the worms a feast.

Farewell, ye sublunary scenes, and sad !
 Hung round with 'scutcheons, and in mourning clad ;
 Where cruel War, and ghastly Famine rage,
 And sudden sweep Life's temporary stage ;
 Where pale Disease destructive pow'r assumes,
 And fills the world with hospitals and tombs ;
 Where Pains the body rack, the limbs distort,
 And fix their arrows in the sicken'd heart ;
 Where poignant Grief o'erwhelms the human mind,
 Robs it of reason, and distracts mankind ;
 Where Hope by Disappointment's dagger bleeds,
 And Woe to Woe with speedy step succeeds ;
 Where Poverty stalks forth in all her gloom,
 And leads her children pensive to the tomb ;

F

Where

Where DEATH, the monarch of this tragic scene,
With rage insatiate, and with poniard keen,
Spreads ruin wide—and when the tyrant calls,
The drama closes, and the curtain falls.

Once more, ye fublunary scenes, farewell !
I'm warn'd to quit you by each solemn knell :
Dull world, and sage ! of thee I take my leave ;
Form'd to distress, disquiet, and bereave :
Let others fawn, and pay their court to thee ;
Thou hast no friendship, and no charms for ME !
Gay world to some—to me sad world, adieu !
Till the last day shall break with glories new.

F I N I S.

